

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

DECISION RECORD
Jasper Creek Timber Sale
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-EA-02-22

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Jasper Creek Timber Sale were prepared by the South Valley Resource Area, Eugene District Office. Timber harvest, road improvement and temporary road construction would occur on Matrix lands as identified in the Northwest Forest Plan. Density management would occur on Riparian Reserves to acquire desired vegetation characteristics needed to attain Aquatic Conservation Objectives. The Jasper Creek Timber Sale is located in Section 35 of T. 22 S., R. 3 W., Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Management objectives are to:

- Fulfill the BLM's mission and policy of providing wood products and jobs in the Matrix Land Use Allocations for Fiscal Year 2003.
- Manage the Connectivity portion of Matrix Land Use Allocations by density management thinning to reduce stocking density, redistribute growth and yield to the remaining overstory trees, improve growing conditions for understory vegetation to promote canopy layering and species diversity.
- Improve the Riparian Reserves stand complexity, develop late seral characteristics and large woody debris for recruitment into the stream channel.
- Construct temporary roads for timber harvest.
- Manage the existing road network through road improvement.

Consultation:

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was completed. All terms contained in the “Programmatic Biological Opinion for Projects with the Potential to Modify the Habitats of Northern Spotted Owls and/or Bald Eagles or Modify the Critical Habitat of the Northern Spotted Owl - Willamette Province FY 2003-2004 will be followed. This project is determined to be a “no affect” action for bald eagles and a “may affect, likely to adversely affect” action for spotted owls. There will be “no affect” to spotted owl critical habitat.

Public Comment:

Comments on the project proposal were solicited from the general public by the inclusion of this project in the Eugene District Planning Update “Eye to the Future,” March 2002

Four alternatives were developed, including a “no action” alternative. Another alternative, a “helicopter logging” alternative, was considered but eliminated from detailed study (section III.E.).

This EA and FONSI were advertised on October 2, 2002 in the Eugene Register Guard. The EA is also available on the internet at <http://www.edo.or.blm.gov/nepa>. Copies of the EA and FONSI were also mailed to affected tribal governments, state and local agencies, and interested individuals. The public comment period ended on November 1, 2002. No comments were received.

Finding of No Significant Impact:

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment (OR090-EA-02-22), and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the Proposed Action or Alternative will not have significant environmental impacts not already addressed in the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994) and the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995) as amended by the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, January 2001. Environmental Assessment OR 090-EA-02-22 is in conformance with the above documents and does not, in and of itself, constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) or a supplement to the existing EIS is unnecessary and will not be prepared.

Decision:

Based on site-specific analysis in the Environmental Assessment, the supporting record, management recommendations contained in the Watershed Analysis (Cottage Grove Lake/Big River Watershed Analysis, May, 1997) as well as management direction contained in the RMP (Eugene District Resource Management Plan) dated June 1995, I have decided to implement the Proposed Action in the Jasper Creek Timber Sale Environmental Assessment as analyzed in EA OR090-EA-02-22. This Alternative will thin an estimated 59 acres in the Matrix land use allocation, thin approximately 11 acres in Riparian Reserves, construct approximately 3400 feet of native surface temporary road (to be decommissioned after completion of harvesting), and improve an existing road by installing a new culvert and replacing a culvert at stream crossings. An estimated 987 MBF of timber will be harvested. The mitigation measures, design features and management requirements, and logging methods as described in the EA, are hereby adopted.

Rationale for the Decision:

This proposed action best meets the purpose and needs as described in the EA. This action will:

1. Contribute to meeting the need for a sustainable supply of timber by making 987 MBF of timber available for harvest.
2. Reduce stand density, improve growing conditions for residual trees and promote canopy layering and species diversity on approximately 59 acres of Matrix lands.
3. Assist in the attainment of the ACS objectives by 1) thinning an estimated 11 acres in the Riparian Reserves, 2) decommissioning approximately 3400 feet of temporary roads, 3) replacing and undersized culvert and installing a new culvert at stream crossings.

The “No Action” alternative, Alternative A, and Alternative C were not selected because they would either provide less timber for harvest, treat fewer acres, and contribute less to the attainment of the ACS objectives.

Administrative Remedies:

In accordance with 43 CFR 5003, a notice of sale published in the newspaper will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests. The decision to conduct a sale will be subject to protest for 15 days following first publication of the notice of sale. The expected date for publishing the notice of sale in the Eugene Register Guard is March 5, 2003, although this date is subject to change without notice.

Approved by: /s/ Emily Rice
Field Manager,
Upper Willamette Resource Area

Date: March 3, 2003